

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Department of Vermont Health Access

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**75 Percent of Small Business Employees Enrolled in a Vermont Health Connect Plan for 2014**

WINOOSKI, VT – The vast majority – about 75 percent – of Vermont small business employees and their dependents affected by federally-mandated health care reforms come January will be enrolled in a Vermont Health Connect (VHC) plan for all of 2014, the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) announced today. And safeguards are in place to ensure others don't see a lapse in coverage and have a path to VHC coverage while testing continues on premium processing functions for small businesses.

"We know there have been real frustrations and confusion, but these numbers show we are on the right track," said DVHA Commissioner Mark Larson. "Our goal is to ensure that no one sees a lapse in coverage because of issues with the website. With three-quarters of Vermont small business employees covered in a Vermont Health Connect plan, and safeguards in place to ensure the rest don't see a lapse, we are confident in achieving this goal."

About 39,300 Vermonters are covered by small employers affected by Affordable Care Act (ACA) reforms come January. As website issues caused frustration for those employers, Gov. Shumlin announced a number of additional enrollment options in early November. Vermont employers took advantage of those options in different ways, but the vast majority did so in a way that will result in them being enrolled in a VHC plan right away in January 2014:

- About 75 percent of – or about 29,200 – Vermonters will be enrolled in a VHC plan for 2014. About 2/3rds of those Vermonters are covered by a small business that chose to directly enroll with Blue Cross Blue Shield of VT or MVP Health Care. One-third are covered by employers that will be automatically mapped and enrolled in a VHC plan that most closely resembles their current coverage offering.
- About 15 percent of – or about 5,800 – Vermonters will have their current coverage extended for up to three months because they are covered by an employer that chose that option.
- Less than 9 percent of – or about 3,500 – Vermonters will have their current coverage extended for up to three months until the payment functions are operational on VHC.
- Less than 2 percent of – or about 800 – Vermonters will go through VHC as individuals for January coverage because their employer decided to no longer offer coverage in 2014. VHC is operational for these individuals. They can log on, select a plan and receive an invoice today for coverage beginning Jan. 1.

There are also an estimated 7,200 Vermonters enrolled in 2013 small business health plans as sole proprietors or businesses with only one covered employee. Many of these Vermonters will now be considered individuals under the federal ACA, meaning they will purchase insurance through VHC on the individual market. With that portion of VHC already operational, these Vermonters can log on, sign up

and receive an invoice for January coverage today. If they do not do so, however, their current plans will be automatically extended for up to three months to ensure no lapse in coverage.

The numbers included in this release provide a snapshot of the current make-up of the small group market given the current available information, meaning they may change marginally as additional information is received or businesses make changes to their coverage offerings.

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